

My name is Jerald Lentini. I'm a resident of Manchester, and I am writing to ask the members of the committee to **please support H.B. 5898, an act concerning aid in dying for terminally ill patients.**

I became a supporter of "death with dignity" legislation after watching my mother die of lung cancer during law school. She was a cigarette smoker who became addicted as a teenager, and who was never able to quit despite multiple attempts. She died about a year and a half from the day a metastasized tumor ate into her spine, giving us her first overt symptom of the disease. Chemotherapy was brutal, leaving her weak and ill, but it bought us a little more time with her than we otherwise would have had, even if a good day only meant more than four hours of lucidity. Her final decline took over a month, including eleven days in hospice.

Those eleven days of watching my mother wait to die were horrific, for her as well as for us. Heavy doses of painkillers kept her sedated (I won't lie and say she was comfortable), which was a mercy for her, but not much of one. She had watched her father, Joseph Kaye of Greenwich, spend the last years of his life trapped in a failed, unresponsive body, and never wanted anything of the sort to happen to her. She valued highly having the option to refuse care. I hate that she had to linger when she was ready to be done.

This is not a partisan position for me. It's personal. I don't want to die like my mother did, under a fluorescent light in an antiseptic room, filled with drugs that dull pain by removing sense as machines beep out my remaining hours. When it's my time to go, I want the freedom to leave on my terms.

Please, support H.B. 5898.

Thank you,

Jerald M. Lentini
Manchester, CT